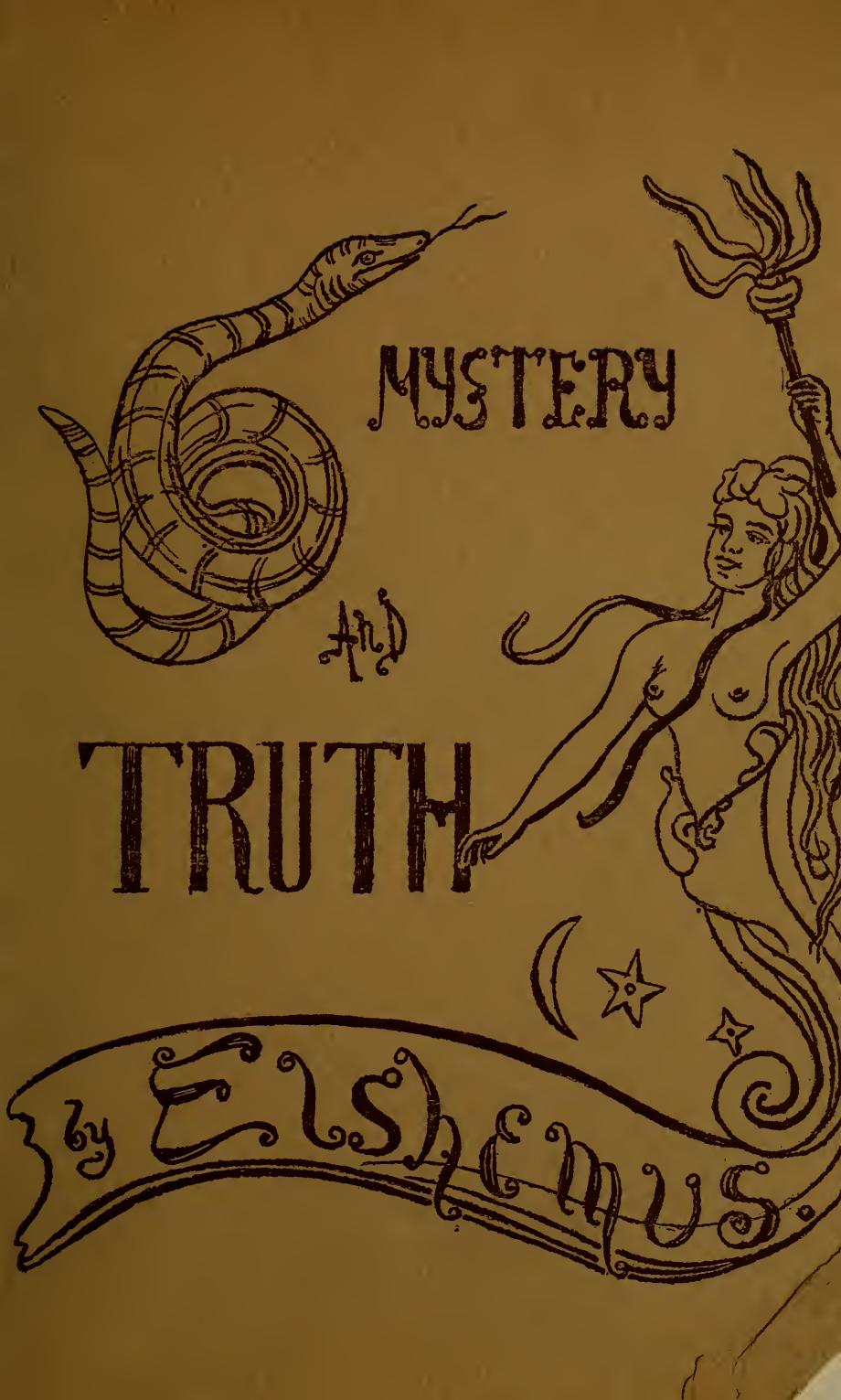
MYSTERY
And
TRUTH
by ELSHEMUS.

MYSTERY
A N D
TRUTH

A Sonnet-Sequence

BY

Louis M. Elshemus

Author of "Mammon"; "Moods of a Soul";
"Poetical Works, etc.
With Cover Design and drawings by the author

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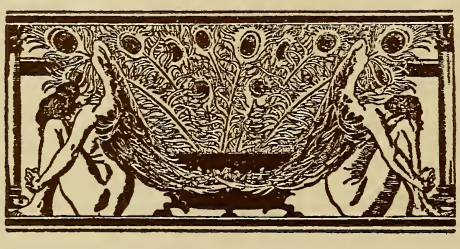
by
Louis M. Elshemus

In memory
of
My Father, who passed to
Realms Above
Just fifteen Years ago.

Foreword

This Sonnet-Sequence was written at Paris, France, in the author's twenty-third year. He was then studying art at Julians. The library of Sorbonne was one of his favorite places of recreation evenings. He was especially interested in perusing books on the Occult Sciences; and the following was the result of a self-imposed wager to prove that if the Will was active, everything could be accomplished.

If the work finds a few readers, the author is satisfied. He does not expect legions to pore over it. However, in every book there is always some thought or some new knowledge to be derived. If you, kind reader, have found such, the author is fully rewarded.



Sonnets

To weave a chaplet for the brows of long gone heads—
To prove the mystic's utterance that wish wins
Its pure desire—to sing against men's sins—
And strike huge harmony for the Pure—Will treads
On the flowery carpet of sweet Poesy's beds—
And resolution will fearlessly begin
A task that shall resound amid the din
Of nations—posterity forever sheds!

Ten to those childhood rambles—five to youth—
Five will assail the wrongs of present love—
Five to the stars—ten to the mystic rites—
Five shall be graven on the Tomb of Truth—
Ten to wild Fancy, and the vision's delights—
And all while thrice the sun doth kiss *one* grove!

To Childhood

I.

Mother gave birth to me when snow invested
The tallest tulip-trees, and on the vine-clung elm
Before my natal mansion ('twas my life's helm
To steer me aye in nature's sea, fair-crested)
The Winter-birds and Winter-sprites had rested.
Beyond the distant frozen stream, a realm
Of ermine mountains rose, to overwhelm
The near, low lawn, of Autumn's garb divested.

When chestnuts crackled in the hearth's red blaze—
When snow creeped up to the high casement-panes—
When Sol lay on the horizon—then life's breath
Was given me; there, right in Nature's maze
Of beauties, in the Winter's soft, white rains,
My mother gave a child to brooding Death.

II.

Scarce five months old was I when o'er the free
  Wild ocean we all sailed to Europe fair;
In baby-hours it was, my eyes did see
  Strange shores, and heard strange accents spoken there,
Yet all unfelt, yet unimbibed; for how
  Could weanling gaze appreciatively on scenes,
On towns, or ruins, or on glorious brow
  Of famed genius; the babe-eye gleans
As dovelet, hovering o'er charmed flowers;
  As tripping waters through historic woods.
Again they took me to my native bowers;
  And there, was master of my baby-moods.
    O happy I, that in Columbia-land
  Fair Nature's glories I could understand!

III.

When twice the earth's two orbits sternly run—
To city's school they sent me, dressed as girl.
My chubby cheeks, my cunningness, my curl
Made all lips cuniform—At class, the fun
Was oft' obstrep'rous—all those tasks were done
In angel-mood; oft 'twas a prize of pearl.,
Or golden trinket, given; oft the merl
On th' street's strong fence made me reflect upon
Those trees, and groves, those flowers, and those lawns,
That flood those hills, in vernant vestments sheening.
Yet in the city learned I, till, when all
The herbs, the hearts, the stones, the airs are greening,
Back to my natal bowers, back to those dawns
Which kissed the knolls, the streams, and tulips tall!

IV.

O childhood's springs and summers, autumns clear—
They were to me more golden than those days
The Persian prince had, when Fairyland was near.
They were more balmful than when Aeol plays
To floating isles, by turquoise seas of song.
They were more melancholy than the strains
That, tearful with the mists of Sylphid's throng,
Weave o'er Aegeaa—when eve's stillness wanes—
O, sheening with the glitter of Ionia's sun,
And shady with the legends o' primordial woods;
O, libertine as when the prairie-mustangs run,
Careless of aught—without solicitude:
So was that time when childhood sweet did prove—
O, 'twas the fruits of all my mother's love!

V.

A brother guided me; his baby-eyes
Stared at my cradle. Castor and Pollux we:
Inseparable; in lily-groves dwelled he—
Pure tuberoses, at his obsequies,
So timely, gave their perfumes, scents of the skies—
Together gambolled aft the gold-thighed bee.
Saw the vermilion-fish; the colibri
Melt in the golden sheen o' the sun; quick flies,
In swarms, we watched, aglee. Together
Played, ran—and dreamed, in fair and faltering weather;
Till the academy we both had entered.
O, what my Victor thought, wa' the thought o' his brother—
Two hearts conjoined, one dead without the other.
Where his dream bloomed, there were my musings centered!

VI.

It was rich Summer's prime, luxuriant-bloomed.
  Our garden emulated with our father's glow.
From far and near—fair Laurel Hill assumed
  A park of Bourbon's time, when peace would blow.
We played a game with mallets—while the pines
  Swayed melody to sweet foragers, the bees.
My hit—Victor, lost in converse's confines,
  Was back of me—it struck his eye—he sees
No more; blood streams—quick, like a hare, I run
  Far, far away—up the near knoll—and hide
In the tall flower grass—"O, God! what have I done?"
  And, crying, ask I pardon—there I long abide—
    With God I hid in the scented grass alone—
    I could not move—stayed there wi' a child's strange moan!

VII.

Long, long I lay o' the long, sweet grass and flowers;
Till my fond cousin found me. My Victor's wound
Was sore—and long my feeble heart had found
No courage to ask pardon. Singing showers
Of gentle drops oft' follow storms—i' those bowers
That reared the golden grain and suckle, he bound
My shyness with a wreath of kisses. Sound
Those lays, when lions should be lambs, and powers
Of adamant should melt to moods of May!
More pure, more sweet-divine, was Victor's way
Of brother's reconcilement. Lily heart!
Thou beatest now no more! Yet thou art turned
To Heaven-beatitude. Victor! When I burned
With child's remorse, thy kisses made it part!

VIII.

O, Victor was my champion, O, my King!
  He was my love—my all I had athen.
Together worked we; and we used to cling
  Together, as the birds to their native glen;
We fed the turtle-doves, and fed the hens;
  Drove to the pond the yellow ducklets; cared
For Jack, the Syrian ass; and kept the pens
  In eye—and all the farm's soft labor shared.
When Spring had blossomed glowing—we would sing,
  And romp—"as lambkins to the tabor's sound."
At Summer's stillness we would loll, or swing
  To passing breezes. Autumn's fruitful ground
    Was our delight—we shouted as its gales—
    Our days were free, as winds through Autumn-vales!

IX.

Together we had seen Mount Blanc; those lakes,
Whose strands bloom all the Italian flowers rare.
We knew the tales of the Black-Forest, where
Soft Uhland hath his monument, where Legend takes
Her palm; O childlike days we spent; where slakes
The doe her thirst, by Moritzburg; O, there
We sported. Yet the fondest days that pair
To all my sweetest memories, those she takes
To her, O, Home, o' Laurel Hill, to keep
Fore'er: those in the silentness of noon,
When poppies hung their drowsy crimson; those
When Spring began to bud, and glow and croon;
And those, when nature made us gently sleep!
And let us hear how the day's stillness flows!

X.

The last time Victor kissed me, when, with doves,
He left me in the town, to go ahome—
(Who thought it—with those turtles, to his groves—
They fluttered 'bove his death-bed—o'er his tomb!)
Two long, long weeks no word from him! One day:
They tell me he's dead—I know not what they mean—
. . . My child-like mind did grasp it not. I lay
Upon the bed, with rushing eyes—O, keen
The blow—My mother shows me him, dead—I start!
My infant mind may grasp it not;—o'er field
And lawn I cry—beneath an oak my heart
Pours out its child-like grief, what words will yield—
My childhood was a fairyland—whose bourne
Has led me to a field where I must mourn!

To Youth

I.

So was I left alone—of joy bereft.
And often in my dreams my Victor came,
Yet in distorted shapes—by some fond cleft
We knew, or by a hut where we did tame
A squirrel; yet he never was alike,
As in real breathing! So my youth was lone—
Was burdened with the memories, that strike
Our thought! To avert the consequential moan
I loved fair nature: with her, listlessly
Or deeply interested, did commune; then took
From olden walls a lyre, that beckoned me;
And since, began a multi-sounding book.
O, strange to wander over fields, where one,
Had blossomed all—and now to be alone!

II.

Yet how the dead have transitory homes
Within the clay-surrounded soul! Though aye
I thought of him; through joys and merry play
I left him, where the birds sing to the tombs
Of long departed; through long years in tomes
My thoughts were hiding—and in pleasant, gay
Companionship the dead are all away—
But, in seclusion, oft his pure face comes!

So was it that in merry Spring a lass
Could lure me to the warm, perfuming grass—
Or, when the moon glanced amorously down,
With rosy lips in silent rooms converse—
Or for my lyre write some liquid verse—
Or smile on laughing children by the town!

III.

They would to chain me to stale traffic's board.
They did—but, like a caged lion, ran
I up and down—till one year did afford
Fair test that I was born another man!
So to the learned halls my fortune led
My star—and happy were those days, though lone—
For sweetest village—fairest hills—and tread
Of lithesome Dryads—and a sun that shone
O'er Liberty—were constant friends to me.
O, Ithaca! above Cayuga's bosom,
There stand those walls that hold futurity;
And 'round about is all one perfect Blossom!
All flowers blanch far from the sun's warm air;
I bloomed: my sphere I found where thought dwells fair!

IV.

I know me, seated by the pond (the bees,
And butterflies disturbed the blooms of Spring)—
In thought to prove earth's deeper marveling.
I know me, with a maiden, walk at ease,
Along a race-course, while the Cupid breeze
Played with her golden ringlets. I hear me sing
To the wild forest—to night's flapping wing;
When flitting stars weave magic filigrees
Upon the hazy gloom. I know me write
On high hills, while the Eve blushed to the Night—
To hear huge omens through the northern moan—
Or there, with Sylphids, laughing brightly—there,
With Daemons, delving through the mystic air—
And, once, when with my God I was alone!

II

I love me seated by the pond — (the bees,
And butterflies disturb the blooms of Spring —)
In thought to prove the earth's deeper marvellings.
I love me with a maiden walk at ease
Along a race-course, while the Cupid-breeze
Played with her golden ringlets. & I hear me sing
To the wild forest — to the night's flapping wing
When the flitting stars wear magic filligrees
Upon the hazy gloom. I love me while
On high hills, while the sun blushed to the night —
To hear huge owens through the northern moon
O, there with Sylphids, laughing brightly — there
With Daemons delving through the mystic air —
And, once, when with my God I was Alone!

V.

To love is sweet—to love with heart and soul
Is glorious; and I loved; yet reeled, nigh died.
For to me was that love from maid denied.
I heard the midnight watchtower dooming toll—
Within my despairing mind did crushing roll—
Yet on the verge of Death—a wreath, sweet pied,
Sweet scented, Heaven gave me; beatified
Was one of theirs—to be kissed at Breath's near Goal!

So was my youth: a memory of the dead.
Its march toward manhood to love's death had led.
Yet as my childhood bore the loss of one,
So has my youth bloomed up from grief and woe.
For thus it was His Will—He wished it so—
He'll make it well—e'en after I am gone!

To The Wrongs of Present Love

I.

Thou shouldst be here, O, Christ—Thy steps would falter!
Or Buddh, or Moses, or our Abraham,
You separately come to know Love's Altar—
O, smile! 'tis partly broken: as a dram
Is gulped, so quaff they love. O, is it love?
Nay, canine courtesy to some fair dame
Once seen—once kissed; O, where, O, antique Jove!
Hadst given such a precedent for shame
To live upon! And if deep, earnest love
Be burning: Vesta's holy, lasting flame—
It is that murderer, gold—that killeth love—
With gold love grew so dank—to swill in shame!
O, Christ! Descend! O, Buddh, thy trumpet sound!
Our race has lost its erstwhile love profound!

II.

To reasonably improve the sexual state
O' affairs, Law should be more severe: not gruff;
But sweetly intertwine the tress of Fate
With those gold-locks of purity! He's rough
To draw a promised love to his desire.
He's a brute, whose passion's hypocritical.
He's beast-like when he tenders passion's fire,
Then lets the maiden all forlorn. O, gall!
Dost simmer in my vitals! This He says:
"Those who will be my own, rear nations thus:
Each have for breath—let each know love and lays—
Each have the heart-bred love, so glorious.
With such a law, vice, crime, greed, shame and theft,
From beauteous earth forever will have left."

III.

This is not life: to know, to be so wise,
Have talents—prosper with an article.
The youth who, when he sees wrong, moists his eyes,
Is guide to the wrong-doer. Victor has the spell
From Heaven—he, though dying in his teens,
Hath lived a hundred years! So was my brother!
This is not life: To lose love when life greens—
To sport with every younger maiden-mother;
Though penalty hath been, to glut the more;
Till of the body, one pollution be.
O, woe to him! rebirths—and sullied gore;
His sickened wrong, debauched felicity!
O, Gabriel! wing thy way upon this world,
Let all its vice, and wryness be unfurled!

IV.

Let fairness go to each—not wrongly judge!
Many a maid is drawn to lust and crime
By need. Oft hath desertion screamed a grudge
Against the sainted love—till drowned—its slime
Hath been the maiden's vision; woe to her,
O, pity her! Requited love is bliss;
Where unreturnèd love has been—demur!
Friend! Seek another—circulate no kiss
Of lewd revenge—which, like a fire, flames
In circling growth, till all the world's infected.
To check such wretchedness, abandon names;
Share all our bliss—even wreathe the world's rejected!
Let Justice claim her rights—let Heaven rule—
Teach these beyond all—at your children's school!

V.

This seal below the written, let it glow
With even star's immortal brilliancy!
This seal is living; it must some day grow,
To spread its light o'er all futurity!
Let love rule all thy heart; its burning must
Command; thy soul must govern; it must bloom
So that thy conscience loves it in the dust—
Proclaims it sealed by the soft loving Doom!
Beyond this, think upon maid's modesty.
Think long before thou blazest what must kill.
T'is thou, o *Man!* committest all we see
Of vileness—every *woman* loves the heart beat still!
O, laugh, Wretch! Thou art punished—Glow, thou Maid—
Soon Vice will die—to Love be homage paid!

To The Stars

I.

What are ye, stars, that twinkle through the cone
Of this globe's shadow! Telescopes have seen
Ye multiplied, as fish in innumerable spawn.
The prism cut your light; chemists have been
So eager to distill it—pronounce it one
With levin's flash; at least, you are like earth,
Though not yet cooled. What prophets, all alone
Upon the desert dreaming, gave this birth:
You are a language, charactered for man.
Our natural eye sees perfect figures drawn,
Connected most with threes and fours—we scan
The sun-left skies—and lo—new truths will dawn:
For nature shaped our eye designedly
Those stars in *speaking* figures aye to see!

II.

Dissection, enumeration: formulate
Them; fashion tables; count the galaxy.
What use—the brain hath cells to emulate
With fifty armies of ten chiliarchs. See
Them? They portray not *the* man! So the stars.
What bliss to know though moon be the fourth orb
I' the scale of planets—what if sun's course mars
The equilibrium of earth's orbit? Absorb
Thou what each motion says to thy own soul.
What every night the star-shaped figures tell.
The ocean's hollow's like a common bowl.
A flame of fire is to some like earth-man's hell!
Learn from the stars as from a grammar's text—
The stars explain what's to be studied next!

III.

Astronomy was the first science—long,
O, long, and long ago ! Astrology
Followed—it was the wedding of Heaven's song
With what men knew o' the Universe so free!
Yet in profane hands came those scrolls of worth,
So stagnated—till died. The present age
Loves hoarding many pieces, O, such birth!
So it indulges in the numbers—and to gauge—
And nothing more. Do you know what he be
Aft having classified his bones—or scanned
His brow—or weighed his heart-blood; do you see
His glory, after his riches; have you scanned
Him with thy scrutiny to know his soul—
Go meditate his *actions*—they'll tell the whole!

IV.

All languages are, to the eye, but signs.
We speak, as any wind, or bird, or stream.
To us, such sounds mean that—the dog divines
What quick speech bids him do! We all do dream,
And know it not! The Universe writes golden,
Upon a depthless, quivering Infinity!
The Heavens were the language of the olden.
They read them—lived, and did accordingly.
We count the letters—add them up—divide
Them—take their means—but lose their words.
O, Age—a Book rolls there—and Scripts abide—
Learn thou its Alphabet—and from our Herds,
Headlong down avenues of gold and numbers, will
A nation *muse* on Skies, where shines His Will!!

V.

This paragraph, this line of golden Lay,
Which in the stars and planets I have read:
The sun doth rise alone, throughout the day,
And shines till eve; at night the sun is dead.
O, life doth rise at birth; it lives its ages.
It dies one day; but Night hath thousand suns;
And Death hath million angels. O, those pages
Within the Universe's holy Bible! runs
Not through them our Life! O read—and lo!
More versed in its gold characters, you'll be
So joyous—bathed in Heaven's coming glow—
A babe fit for the next Eternity!
Go, man! You dream! and know it not! Go man—
Read all thy life and doom from God's Great Plan!

To The Sacred Mystics

I.

We know not, we, who work away in pride.
Who do what teachers tell us, blindly do,
Without self-thought, who ever will deride
What is not matter—what the mystics knew.
O, slumber thou away, and though working hard;
Apply thyself to tasks whose end is gain.
You miss the wisdom, scenting as sweet nard;
And what slow thought moulds to a glorious strain.
We are not born to drudge, nor live to win
A sordid praise—nor do what others did.
We breathe to know what glories are within
The soul; what splendors are in nature hid.
We know not what there shines afar—what near—
Alone to *musing* minds gifts of a Seer!

II.

As best my eagle-quill allows, some hidden truths
Will I disclose; got from the ancients, they
Whose lofty contemplation wooed those sooths,
That ooze, as sap from maples of the May.
Of Hermes first, his rule, O golden rule;
Writ down before nor Science proud had crowned
Itself—nor speculation arrogant, school
Aft' school to factions shaped. O, when earth's ground
With virgin flowers quickened was—when men
Their languorous hours spent in meditation;
Then Hermes, now unseen by savants' ken,
Wrote wisdom high, almost divine dictation.
O, Hermes thought—and with his magic speech he gave
Futurity the secrets of our Life and grave!

III.

Smaragdus-table of great Hermes—read:
" 'Tis true—without a lie—O very true!"
So opens it: the triune Law; the ternary thread
Which governs all life; " 'tis true," so accrue
The sciences of to-day; experimental;
There endeth; 'tis the physical world. "No lie;"
Opposing tests, it seeks the transcendental.
It correspondeth to morality.
"O very true;" their marriage; flaming up
To synthesis absolute; no diverging thoughts.
With this we drink elixir from Truth's cup;
And know the laws with which th' Omniscient wrought.
O could all try; think, own the truth that lies
Far up in Spirit's solemn Eternities!

IV.

"What's up, is down; to shape one miracle!"
Hermetic phrase; anology 'twixt man, and woman.
Both, at auspicious moment, love; to spell
Th' incipient child. Or, heat, and cold, assume an
Unclosed whole in having shaped th' inane.
"As all is from One, so all is born in Him
By adaptation. Sun touched Moon; the Strain
Of Wind bore It; the Earth gave food. High Whim
Broods here—its force is strong when changed to earth."
There is a fluid, like imagination; 'tis
All-increate in nature; fills the Universe.
Through it: telepathy; our rancor—bliss;
Our dreams, and visions. Man! let Fancy live
With thee—so she the Magic Keys may give!

V.

"Thou separate earth from fire, the subtile from clay
With patient industry! It riseth high
At once; again, to earth. Thus mixed, It may
Have powers of this globe, and of God's Sky!
With It thou gloriest; all Darkness flees!
This: Power absolute; it conquers spirit;
And penetrateth rock! These the Genesis
Of All!" Thus may we diamond-light inherit;
In meditation lost, perceive the atoms change;
Ride on the ether—check our passion's charge.
Thus let our dreams o'er flower-heavens range;
And to the Unknown sail with Angel's Barge!
O, dream thou on those golden, fathomed lines—
He who will patience love—he all divines! !

VI.

"From these will be, and escape, innumerable ways
To do—create; the means for whom, I said!
Hermias Tremigistus am I named; my says
Are all in the Three Potent Huge-Worlds laid!
What of Sun's operation I have told—is done—
Ay—superachieved!" So ends the Beryl-Rule
Of Hermias Tremigistus, father—who had begun
To delve in Mysteries; ended in no School;
But flashed his knowledge like sun-rays; for men
To ponder over; till, as now the savant sees
The prism from *one white* light, those, whose ken
Be governed by spirit, know those Secrecies! !
O, blinded Modern! Learn from the unseen—
The seen will be then plain—as Spring's own green!

VII.

We all have read or heard of the Mystic Stone;
The Diamond in the Toad's brain; all is true.
To him who thinks and dreams, to him alone
Will clouds disperse, Heaven glow in warmest blue!
Life's Panacea, juvenescence bringing:
O, 'tis elixir that contains ingredients,
That vitalize; but no Egyptian singing—
Or cymbal-clashes eke it. Stern expedients
Marry to years of patience. Knowledge burns
One moment only—when the salts ferment;
If 'tis not caught, of sudden it then returns
To subtle secrecy—where it was pent.
With God-trust only may the Elixir foam—
'Tis real, but eke it: may'st thou have no home!

VIII.

Who dreamt that he was salt and sulphur mixed—
Got life from the unmalleable rock of ages;
That he hath in him pebble, moss, and, 'twixt
The two, runs nervous, what the heart so rages!
Who thought that from an animal could grow
From the imperfect man the perfect man,
Whose soul attracted Glorious Heaven's glow;
Till, through the brute an Angel-current ran.
Three lives have we who live as higher creature:
One, when from the miraculous womb we come,
Is like the lamb's or tiger's; then 'twas Nature,
On whom we mused, hinted at Soul's high Home.
Another life: revere it—which we *sow*
In woman—letting from it nations grow!

IX.

The Sphinx's riddle is disclosed; yet broods
She, It, and They, upon the Lybian plain.
What you from me do learn—within your *moods*
Inmix it—but never tell It me again!
O, search—and delve! Thy mind be fortunate.
For verily, with Christ I preach, our thought
Must wed the Celestial Wisdom; elevate
Thy soul—the eagle's pinions take—and wrought
With flanks of the strong toiling ox! But never
Lose view of thine imagination, which is God.
O, man, who laughs at me! Learn to dissever
The beast from man—and soul, with Magic's Rod!
Then trust in Him—or die in Nature's arms;
Though cold is Death, the Soul it never harms!

To Truth

I.

Let Truth assail mind's darkness—as a flash
Of storm's quick lightning vanquisheth the gloom
Of ebon cloud-wracked Night! Upon her Tomb
Let these bolts fall—destroy her stone and crash
It to a thousand atoms, till there swash
Those floods of supernatural light—assume
A tranquil sky of brilliancy, in bloom—
O, shower light, light—till it, spreading, lash
Th' unconscious clay: Kindle it till it burn
To one eternal pure effulgence divine!
So may Truth, aft' its grave, more hugely shine.
All what is hidden—hath the Devil there.
Ask Heaven for true Light—all you will learn—
And life flows thrice more sweet—O thrice more fair!

II.

When I was young, and fairy tales yere teeming,
My infant eyes oft marveled at some creatures,
That donned long robes down to the ground, and seeming
As if upon a base they moved; their features
Were other from men's downed lips; long tresses
Streamed on their shoulders; but I marveled long
Why with no limbs they paced, but with long dresses
That touched the grass; and in me thoughts did throng:
Many as stars in skies, but mute as they.
Till one Spring-morn I saw a Dryad bathe—
All was unveiled; I sang another lay.
I knew what they did hide, those cloths that swathe
The young and keep them ignorant. O truth!
They kept thee mummied up to wondering youth!

III.

Youth's education be the flower's knowledge,
The rain's moist wisdom, and the star's true light.
Forbear those abstruse nothings taught at college
That bring to golden locks sparse hairs of white.
First tell thy youth his destination's duty;
What all his body hath—for life—and action.
Then aye uphold to him the Stars of Beauty.
Inure him to the woes of lust's Distraction.
O, let him aye revere his body's doings.
Tell him wherefore, whyfore, and what is Right—
Implant in him the sacredness of Wooings;
Give him the keys to conquer every Plight.
O, man, before thou thinkest of thy pelf,
Rear up thy child—TO KNOW, at first, HIMSELF!

IV.

O, know thyself, O Man! This conquers scruples.
O, joy in what the Lord so richly gave.
From all you know, gain with it constant Pupils;
Till, having gloried all, you seek your grave!
O, woe to vice, and wrong and wretchedness!
They thrive where Truth hath sullied her own self.
Indue thy children with Truth's loveliness.
Away with profit, a miser's sordid pelf.
Where Truth smiles there Spring violets will blow.
Where Truth sings there is Happiness for all.
So then, Man, let thy children always know
Where She abideth, so they'll never fall.
I wot, if Truth held sway in all our doings,
O, sweeter life—and sweeter all our wooings!

V.

I would to flow my voicings like a flood
Within the stormy World, and, as the sea
In every cavern feels the river's flood,
So would my sooths to all as welfare, be.
O, first, before the dullest mathematics,
Blow loud the office of the vitals; give
To growing brains the truths of high æsthetics,
So they may aye by virtue's blessings live.
Go thou to India's temples; or to where
Their wooings by the patriarchs guided are.
So know: the thriving nations are not there
Where breed licentiousness, or lingering war.
I would my voicing spilled in every heart—
As floods in oceans flow to every part.

To Fancy

I.

Titania spites me! I must hasten, hasten,
Before the golden film be o'er the skies,
To achieve my task. O, may it chasten, chasten
The World, engulfed by clefts of miseries!
Titania smileth, she wants vassals light—
Ay, light of heart, and flexible of word—
And capable to magic darkness to stars so bright—
And moans to the fresh warble of Joy's bird.
Titania let her minstrels on a holiday:
Because she knew that I would tibiate.
She told them come again, when the moon's ray
Be lustering fields of cypress-folded fate!
Ay, bright the stars Titania spells for me
I magic grief and woe to jollity!

II.

Old Shakespeare! paired, when blossoms blush.
Thy Hannah blessed thee thrice with cherry-babes.
Ay, with the buskin strod'st thou; and with the flush
Of humor on thy cheek—the sock thou disdain'st not.
Facility to follow all thy moods with laughter,
Whose spray would fast be shaped to immortal phrases.
O, enviable "Will," whose eldest daughter
Died without issue—therefore art thou dead!
But ever in man's sky those million phases
In all thine inextinguishable orbs are read:
As like bold seamen, with their astrolabes
Study the unfathomable night! O, thou maintain'st not
Thy progeny—but of thy daedal brain
Those children bear themselves again, again!

III.

Came a Damosel, with azure eye and tresses,
Long as her beauty; came she by the stream,
Languishing by forget-me-nots and cresses.
And sat she by me, who could naught but dream.
Said the Damosel: Thou pinest as autumn's flower—
Thy cheek is sunk from weariness and woe—
Come with me to my sumptuous, magic bower,
Where round about sweet minstrels music flow.
Her touch electrified me—her soft, warm hand
Thrilled as the first warm day aft winter's cold.
Together hied we o'er fields, to airs so bland,
Where sweetly flowered the Damosel's own fold.
She kissed me—all was gone—yet tasted I
That forlorn wretches have their Angels nigh.

IV.

Those hunters tippled all night—and laughters mingled
With their gay tales—as through the lattice wove
The Alpine-moon her olden story. Singled
From all the others stood a stranger: love
Lay on his brow, and nestled on his cheek.
He blew the fumes to east and west; yet quiet
He stood, or leaned, or looked, but would not speak.
O, solemn eyes, contracting holy fiat;
Or dreaming deep, deep, monstrous dreams? He dreamed
As real as dreams can be. Through day she smiled
On him; both cooed, as any doves—there seemed
A flame in either's eye. And night beguiled
Them with her darkness—so they did their wrong.
The stranger left—his dream was true as song!

V.

O, Fancy, many ditties have I sung
To thee—thou flowery goddess of man's joys!
When child I was, when I was all too young
To write or spell. Yet now when maid decoys
The youth, O, maid, more beauteous, fair
Than thou, O Fancy! fancy, why she be!
For when we love thee, thou art never there
To embrace me; but a maiden is there for me:
To kiss her rosy, moss-surrendering cheek;
To press her bosom to my trembling heart;
To joy in her when days are cold and bleak.
O laugh she did; O Fancy laughed: "Thou art
The dupe of thy own fancy—Minerva's child.
Maidens change—but *constant* is thy Fancy wild!

VI.

Of visions; first of Dante's, then of mine.
Beatrice died—he knew she was in Heaven;
Therefore his lyre rung of fields divine.
Yet is my love on earth—and I am driven
To cant upon th' injustice of this world.
God thus distributes tasks to higher minds
Estranged; and either finds his storm unfurl'd
By Angel-harps, till all his earth-life finds
A glorious anthem in homage to the God.
Of Dante's Angels: they brought her in clouds;
They sang, that she near Heaven's Holies trod.
Mine showed her living face, while in sleep's shrouds
I lay; both were as flesh and breath; one was
From Heaven come—mine earthly gleamed—alas!

VII.

You say the skies are mute—are fire—and may
Not, sudden, show, in symbols, magic speech.
My life hath known one extraordinary day
When in the night (what many will impeach)
A fiery cross flamed up with jewel's glow,
Within the seven-starred square of mighty Orion!
A cross, with flames of electric trembling snow,
And diamonds, beading downward! Oh! thou Zion—
Thou Branch of the Almighty's Thought, sing!
Divulge this mystery in that summer night!
Again create such magic marveling:
High in the skies that cross of diamond light,
O, Soul, whose sweet indwelling is my mind—
'Tis thus that Angels for them lovers find!

VIII.

Delightful is the murmur of the fell,
When Dian rests; and all her Nymphs surround
Her all unparalleled loveliness. The yells
Of Dian's hounds no more destruction sound;
And Cupid now may soft repose upon
The flowered mosses, by the oak-cooled sward.
O, Dian bathes; what Parian glister shone;
What roses trembled below her chin; why guard
Those sheeny beauties her incensed recess?
Why shivers Dian, aft her bold, swift chase;
And modesty gives her a gauzy dress?
O, why that timidness, that sinuous grace!
O, Acteon saw—yet Virgin was sweet Dian.
He had to die—would maidens do as Dian!

IX.

O haste thee hither, Spirits of my Soul!
As speedily, as flames up to the sky;
As willingly, as when we drink sweet bowl
Of Spring's herb-wine; as lovingly do hie,
As Love's own child, when passion seized her.
And under her strong lover's lips she bends
Her neck—atiptoe—till his kiss released her
Of all the upwelling blood that love but sends.
O haste thee hither—Spirits of my Life!
You mediators 'twixt my Breath and Death.
Since she, rosebud without a flaw, my wife
Will never be—or is she with thee, strange, strange Death?
At all odds, haste ye hither, Spirits pure—
Your inspirations will let me endure!

X.

This last one, the completion of my task,
O why not dedicate to unseen agents;
And marvel how they let me swiftly bask
In sunshine, then allow me don some pageants.
O wonder how in three short days—in twelve
Quick hours fifty sonnets they did give:
Without a tome, a guide; nor did I delve
In olden story; but they let them live
As butterflies burst forth from crysalids.
O say! how is it that my thought may wander
About, in realms so small as skull? O bids
Some one due value for these songs of thunder
And balmful breezes? Lo! they have no worth:
For like the mellow lightning had they birth.

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